

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



## State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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Contact: Samantha Slapnik  
Phone: 919/733-5612

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### **GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR NEW HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT**

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that Dr. Tony Habit has been named as the first executive director of the New High School Project. The program, which is funded by an \$11 million grant secured by Easley from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will be overseen by the Governor's Education Cabinet and coordinated by the Public School Forum of North Carolina.

"As with any major initiative, leadership is the key to success," Easley said. "Tony Habit will bring critical experience and a track record of taking good ideas and translating them into reality. My office will work closely with him to ensure that this project achieves our goals of creating successful new high schools and preparing students for the workforce and college."

Recently, Easley announced the grant from the Gates Foundation and the effort to create 40 to 45 new high schools across the state over the next five years. The New High School Project will work with school districts, business and industry, higher education and local communities to create smaller, more personalized high schools with deeper connections to the workforce and college.

John Dornan, executive director of the Public School Forum which is managing the project, said, "Tony Habit has nearly 20 years of successful non-profit management and he has proven that he can successfully work with educators, business leaders and policymakers, all of whom will be critical to the success of this project. More than that, he is an educational visionary who is committed to making our schools first in the nation."

Habit began his educational career with the Durham County School System. In 1989 he became the founding executive director of the Durham Public School Network. Habit then assumed the executive directorship of the Wake Education Partnership where he launched an intensive process to align the community and the public schools in adopting shared, measurable goals for change.

A native of Edenton, Habit earned a bachelor of arts degree in English literature and political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in education from the University of South Carolina. In 1998 he completed a doctoral degree in Educational Administration from Columbia University, Teachers College in New York.

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Governor's Press Office  
State Capitol, Raleigh, NC 27603-8001  
(919) 733-5612 - Toll Free 1-800-662-7005  
FAX (919) 733-5166